from *Book of Remembrance of Marion County Oregon Pioneers* by Sarah Hunt Steves 1927.
SARAH SODEN HOVENDEN-1851

(Source: Mrs. M.L. Jones, Brooks, Oregon) [her daughter]

Sarah Soden, wife of Alfred Hovenden, of Hubbard, Oregon, was married to him in 1856 at the early age of seventeen, when he had reached the age of thirty-two, quite an old bachelor for pioneer times.

Sarah Soden's parents were born in Ireland: her father, Bartholomew Soden, at Athlone, while her mother, whose name was Ann Goodall, was born at Dublin. These good folk were both educated as teachers and were sent to Tasmania to teach in the government schools. This country was then called Van Dieman's Land. This was in the early '30s. It was while in this new country they met and were married in 1836.

Several children were born to this couple while in Tasmania, including Sarah, the subject of this sketch, who was born in 1839. One of her brothers, Bartholomew Soden, has made his home in Portland, Oregon, since pioneer days.

The Soden family were Protestants and devout members of the Baptist church. The news of the gold discovery in America greatly stirred the inhabitants of Australia and Van Dieman's Land. The Sodens were filled with the spirit of adventure and were not long in making up their minds to try their luck in the new land that held out such alluring prospects for gold.

Mr. Soden was an enterprising sort of man and conceived the idea of having half a dozen houses, of assorted sizes, built and then taken apart and made ready for shipment to be set up again on his arrival in California, for rental purposes. After their arrival at the Sandwich Islands (now Hawaii), they heard that the stories of gold discoveries in California were greatly exaggerated, so decided to remain in Honolulu, where they stayed for two years.

The Sodens were not contented there. Their hearts had been set on America and nothing else would satisfy them, so upon hearing of the wonderful farm land to be had in the Oregon country, for the mere effort of filing, they decided that was what they wanted. Mr. Soden crossed the ocean to San Francisco, thence up the coast to Astoria. It had taken the family three months to make the trip by water from Van Dieman's Land to Honolulu and it took three weeks for the latter trip to Astoria. After taking up his claim near Butteville, on the Willamette river, he sent for his family. From Honolulu they came on the bark Louisiana to Astoria; from there to S1. Helens by another ocean-going boat and from S1. Helens to Oregon City or Willamette Falls, as it was then called, on the river boat Lot Whitcomb. At the falls they transferred to another still smaller boat for Butteville, their destination for a time.

After a few months at this place a man by the name of Parker bought out their "squatter's rights" and the Soden family moved to Spring valley, in what is now Polk county, seven miles from Salem, Oregon.

In those days they did their trading at Eola, a thriving settlement that at the date of 1851 had great hopes of eventually becoming the capital of the state.

Sarah Soden resided in Spring valley until 1856, when as stated above, she became the wife of Alfred Hovenden and also became a pioneer of Marion county.